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Engaging green governmentality through ritual

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> " The wood thief has robbed the forest owner of wood, but the forest owner has made use of the wood thief to purloin the state itself " (Karl Marx 1842:17).

Introduction

1 National and international conservation efforts in Madagascar have gradually intensified over the last two decades. In 2005 alone, the country's National Environmental Action Plan received over $ 170 million in funding (Rabesahala-Horning 2008). The population of the island is also increasing; Madagascar's growth rate currently stands at just over three percent. Many rural people who live in and around the millions of hectares of protected area are being swept into attempts to integrate conservation, development and family planning. As the Malagasy increasingly participate in thickening layers of governmental and non-governmental programs and technologies, their contestation of and resistance to such forces has attracted relatively little social scientific research[1]. This article seeks to address this gap. Power operations entail their own resistances; therefore, a detailed picture of the conservation apparatus is required. I employ a governmentality approach to draw such a picture of Madagascar as a whole and of the rain forests surrounding the Ranomafana and Andringitra National Parks in the east of the island in particular. I then turn to a study of a public performance held at the entrance to the Ranomafana National

Park that involved resident Malagasy, Park staff, and a range of state and international policy makers. A geographically-informed ethnography of speaking analysis of the day's events foregrounds a rural Malagasy people expanding a space from which to engage policy makers on their own terms, with their own strategic need interpretations, self-formations and precedent-setting best practices. Through this remarkable scalar performance, residents work to demonstrate their historical claims to land within the Ranomafana National Park, to articulate their successful interrelations with the forests and to offer a novel platform for a realpolitik dialogue about their own future.

Conserving Madagascar

2 Madagascar has seen a surge in environmental conservation activity. Awash in debt to international financial institutions, its legitimacy threatened by the effects of years of structural adjustment programs, and pressured by an army of international experts, the leadership in Antananarivo has had little choice but to direct its policy orientation toward the environment. Built upon a $ 100 million fund provided by the World Bank and WWF, Madagascar's National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) was established in 1990. The Plan was operationalized in 1991, and envisioned three phases running a total of fifteen years (1991-1995; 1996-2002; 2003-2008). Very generally, the goal was to create the institutional infrastructure for the country's environmental policy, reverse processes of environmental destruction, responsibilize rural communities for natural resource management and to shore-up environmental institutions (Razafindralambo & Gaylord 2005).

3 Financial assistance has steadily increased throughout the Plan's three phases. Bilateral and multilateral funding (especially from the World Bank) rose from $ 100 million in Phase one to over $ 170 million in Phase three (Rabesahala-Horning 2008). Established alongside the NEAP was a multi-donor secretariat (SMB) that employs a set of conservationist policy goals to guide donor activities. Participating in the SMB is the World Bank, USAID, the German, Japanese, French and Swiss governments, Conservation International, WWF, and the Wildlife Conservation Society. As Duffy (2006) points out, the SMB enjoys far-reaching influence over most of Madagascar's policy sectors.

4 In 2005, there were 41 protected areas covering 1.5 million hectares of Madagascar's forests. At a meeting in South Africa, the recently deposed President Marc Ravalomanana announced his Durban Vision Initiative, a plan calling for a tripling of the amount of the island's protected territory to 6 million hectares. Squarely in line with donor emphasis on integrated sectoral planning, Ravalomanana linked the goal of protecting 10% of the island's territory with a 50% reduction of poverty by 2015. Donor influence could also be seen in Ravalomanana's steady shift away from Madagascar's former colonial overseer, France, and toward the United States and South Africa.

5 With the passing of each phase of the NEAP, there have been substantive transformations in the overall approach to managing natural resources. The integrated conservation/development program (ICDP) approach dominated Phase one. In ICDPs operative worldwide, expanses of land are enclosed, defined instrumentally as national or global resources, and protected from a host of destructive threats, including the subsistence practices of resident peoples. With the enclosure of land (often locking down parts of the

ancestral estates of local residents), ICDP managers offer assistance in meeting the needs of resident people.

6 By 1996 the ICDP approach came under increasing critical scrutiny from ANGAP (Madagascar's National Association for the Management of Protected Areas), USAID and the World Bank. The approach was seen to be too narrow in geographical scope, insufficiently attuned to agricultural development and possible inputs from the private sector (Razafindralambo & Gaylord 2005), prone to the misidentification of threats, and laboring with underdeveloped conceptual links between conservation and development (Garnett, Sayer & du Toit 2007).

7 Turning from the ICDP approach, conservation planners began to explore a combination of community conservation and regionalized landscape approaches (or the landscape ecology approach). The landscape ecology approach, popular toward the end of the 1990s, expands the protected area idea to larger regional landscapes, integrating information gained from multiple scales, and betting on the increased resiliency of a diverse ecosystem. Conservation International in Madagascar is a major proponent of such programs. As we shall see, USAID has been instrumental in funding corridor projects like the 200 kilometers of administered space linking the Ranomafana to the Andringitra National Park. In the landscape approach, we see a shift from project designs that seek to integrate conservation with the development of residents to a stricter focus on the protection of ecosystems and watersheds. The subsistence practices of people living along the corridor are, in a very real sense, separated off from the work of conservation.

8 USAID, however, has in no way eliminated its development efforts in and around the corridors. The organization is focused on three "ecoregions" in Madagascar: Fianarantsoa, Toamasina and Anosy. In 2007, it obligated $ 6.1 million dollars for these areas under its biologically diverse forest ecosystem efforts. USAID's Ecoregional Initiatives Program for the corridors is concerned with good governance and transparency in managing core biodiversity protection zones, and sustainable and multiple sustainable use zones near the corridor fringes (USAID 2008).

9 Community conservation approaches, for their part, are founded upon the more difficult assumption that resident peoples cannot be bracketed off from conservation planning. They also assume that because the basic needs of participants tie them to the area under protection, behavior can be better managed. Wright and Andriamihaja make this link disturbingly clear for the case of expanded ICDPs: "The people living near the parks are relatively poor, making it easier for an ICDP to make important contributions to their basic needs and thus to have more influence on their decision making" (2002: 130). A variety of planning strategies have emerged under this paradigm including expanded and modified ICDPs and contractual forest management (GCF) efforts. The latter approach grows out of a goal of the second phase of the NEAP: the transfer of natural resource management to local communities. The legal infrastructure for contractual forest management activity is laid out in both Madagascar's 1996 Law No. 96-025 known as GELOSE and the National Forest Policy #2001-122 known as GCF. Here, a local community living on or in a forest can forge a contractual agreement with the Malagasy Forest Service regarding the management of the land. A community-level forest association (COBA) is formed by resident forest users to work with the government on land management processes. The central goal of the GCF arrangement is to shift responsibility and accountability for natural resource management on to resident peoples. There are

currently over 400 GELOSE and GCF contracts in existence throughout Madagascar (Raik & Decker 2007).

10 The first and second phase of Madagascar's Environmental Action Plan was directed primarily by the state and a select group of bilateral and multilateral institutions. The third phase – the phase of "clustered partnerships" – saw the appearance of a wide range of actors including NGOs, regional Malagasy governments, resident communities, private interests, etc. The model here was one of multisectoral, multi-agent and multi-faceted partnerships.

11 The case under analysis in the present article unfolds against the Ranomafana National Park, which is located in the Province of Fianarantsoa in the southeast of Madagascar. The 43,500 hectare Park houses a major watershed that feeds dozens of important rivers in the region. This is a site of rain forest megabiodiversity, with 13 endemic species of primates, 70 species of reptiles and amphibians and a remarkable diversity of land snails. There are dozens of hamlets (*tanana*) scattered around the Park's perimeter. A majority of these residents claim either Tanala or Betsileo identities. From 1991-1997, Ranomafana resources were managed by an ICDP called the Ranomafana National Park Project (RNPP). Funding for the Project during these years came primarily from USAID[2].

12 With the 1997 end of Phase one of the NEAP, the RNPP terminated operations. ANGAP, now working with the World Bank through Phase 2 of the Plan, took over Park operations and ended Project agricultural development, health and education efforts. Local and global NGOs (especially the Malagasy NGO Tefy Saina) struggled to fill the gaps. Money from Park entrance fees supplemented ANGAP's budget. Managers from the RNPP were instrumental in establishing a Malagasy NGO called the Malagasy Institute for the Conservation of Tropical Ecosystems (MICET) (closely tied to the Institute for the Conservation of Tropical Environments (ICTE) at the State University of New York – Stony Brook). Funding now comes from the Earth Watch Institute, State University of New York – Stony Brook, USAID, and a number of small grants. Tellingly, all resident outreach efforts were restored by MICET except for agricultural development. The later sector was left to ANGAP and the micro-projects that its entrance fees could support.

13 In keeping with their gradual withdrawal from agricultural development, RNP managers have adopted the regionalized landscape approach. The RNP is now tied to the Andringitra National Park by a 280,000 hectare central corridor. After 1997, a majority of the skilled Malagasy working for ICDPs around the island began working for NGOs, partnering in various ways. Now supported by USAID, Phase three of the Plan is "marked by the end of private foundation support for integrated work, and the gradual embedding of cross-sectoral initiatives into comprehensive development programming" (Mogelgaard & Patterson 2006: 3). Thus, for a very partial example, working around the Ranomafana-Andringitra corridor, MICET partnered with USAID, the Packard Foundation, Association Ainga, Jereo Salama Isika, Ny Tanintsika (all Malagasy NGOs) and Chemonics International for the Madagascar Green Healthy Communities (MGHC) projects from 2002 to 2005 (MGHC is a population-health-environment effort).

Governmentality, the Malagasy State and the Will to Conserve

14 As the preceding discussion implies, the Malagasy state is in the process of significant reconfiguration, as it is suffering from what Appadurai calls a "crisis of redundancy" (2002:24). This is in no way to claim, however, that the Malagasy state has ceased to be relevant. The conceptual tools provided by Michel Foucault's writings on governmentality offer a powerful way to comprehend the Malagasy state's rapidly changing regimes of conservation and development. In the *History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, Foucault wrote, "« [i]n political thought and analysis, we still have not cut off the head of the king » ([1978]1990:88-89). The model of political power referred to here by Foucault has its basis in nineteenth century philosophical and constitutional conceptions of the sovereign state, whose leaders wielded law and coercion to help legitimize force across a unified territory. In contrast, *contemporary* political space, Foucault argues, is constituted simultaneously by contextually-specific assemblages of sovereignty (and its remnants), the disciplining of the body via "anatomo-politics of the human body" and the management of populations through "bio-politics of the population". In the governmentality writings, Foucault conjoins his earlier concerns with the micro-physics of power with the macro-political question of the state (see Macleod & Durrheim: 2002).

15 For Foucault, the state is "nothing more than the mobile effects of a regime of multiple governmentalities [and that] it is necessary to analyze the problem of the state by referring to the practices of government" (2004:79). Governmentality, for its part, is understood in terms of the techniques for conducting human behavior. Such conduction, in this approach, is not located with the state alone, but spread throughout various sites in society. Practices of government have at their center specific sets of ideas, or rationalities, concerned with doing things to achieve specific ends. Rose, O'Malley, and Valverde explain: "An analysis of governmentalities then, is one that seeks to identify these different styles of thought, their conditions of formation, the principles and knowledges that they borrow from and generate, the practices that they consist of, how they are carried out, their contestations and alliances with other arts of governing" (2006:84). Governmental rationalities (governmentalities), in turn, touch ground through practices that are organized into specific programs and technologies of power. Programs are the definite plans through which a rationality of government is specified; they are focused upon "doing something about a 'practicable object'" (O'Malley 1996a:193). Technologies of government, which can be either material or symbolic, are the procedures, tools, mechanisms, calculations, assemblages of knowledge and expertise through which rationalities are concretized and operationalized, and through which conduct is shaped for specific purposes. As Rose-Redwood points out, the key methodological advance here is that Foucault asks questions of the `how' of governance – "how power is operationalized" (2006:474).

16 It is crucial to recognize that technologies do not simply reflect overarching rationalities, as they are drawn from a wide range of contexts. Furthermore, once applied, technologies meet with interpreting subjects (both implementing and implemented upon), and these are informed by a variety of sociocultural forces (Higgins 2004). Also of import is the fact that technologies are the means by which conduct is shaped "from a distance". As Agrawal suggests, it is the "uncoupling of geographical distance from social and political

distance" that such forms of government accomplish (2005:178; See also Li 2007). Foucault's description of the means by which the panopticon enables subjects to self-interiorize surveillance thereby shaping their conduct at a distance is by now well known. Dean (1994) groups such mechanisms under the notion of "governmental self-formation". These formations commonly employ self strategies that seek to intervene on the relations one has with one's self (see Cruikshank 1993).

Advanced Neoliberalism and Conservation

17 The dominant governmental rationality across the globe today is neoliberalism. From its theoretical beginnings with Hayek and Friedman and the state projects of Bush and Thatcher, to the Third Way approaches of Clinton and Blair and today's novel emergent forms, neoliberalism has been molded and remolded. The central contours of neoliberalism are well known: the integration of global capital flows into domestic economies, paid work foregrounded over welfare, regressive taxation, the extension of markets, individualism, public service reform and attacks on all manner of non-commodified values. The broad ambitions of neoliberalism include the consolidation of class power and the regulation (at a distance) of the well being of peoples and spaces via their integration into global market flows. Tsing's portrayal of neoliberalism as involving" a set of scale making projects" (2000:120) is important and will be discussed at length below.

18 In a critical intervention, Peck & Tickell (2002) argued that neoliberalization has gone through a series of historical shifts. "Roll- back neoliberalism", dominant during the 1980s, was characterized by processes of deregulation, marginalization of non-competitive programs, the deligitimation of Keynesian-welfare institutions and the foregrounding of markets and the individual. This form gave way to "roll-out neoliberalism" in the early 1990s, characterized by an ongoing period of state reform, the consolidation of neoliberal technologies, and experimentation with new forms of social regulation.

19 Working and researching in the context of New Zealand, Larner & Craig (2002) and Larner & Le Heron (2002) identify a third shift linked to the roll-out phase: the "partnering state" (see also May, Cloke & Johnsen's (2005) discussion of "the governmentality phase"). Peck & Tickell (2002) point to the vulnerabilities of neoliberal technologies and their highly "variegated" and uneven spread across the social. Larner & Craig (2002) demonstrate that in New Zealand "local partnerships", as a form of" postneoliberal" social governance, have come in to help fill these voids. This observation can be generalized to sites around the world. Local partnerships are multi-sectoral, multi-level and multi-cultural collaborative linkages between central governments, community groups and regional institutions (Rutherford 2007). Community development is often approached in a bottom up fashion and is "based on the idea that communities themselves have the best knowledge of their social service issues and needs" (Larner & Butler 2004:4). Governmental technologies are here employed to work with the allegiances of community members to build new spaces and subjects of governance.

20 Much of Foucault's work on sovereign and disciplinary power was concerned with a now receding notion of the social. Society in this conception comprised the sum total of relationships between people, things and events unfolding within a circumscribed territory and governed by specific laws (Rose 1996:328). This was the social of collective

being. With the partnership state, governance shifts to the individual and her community. As Rose clarifies the issue: "Government through community, even when it works upon pre-existing bonds of allegiance, transforms them, invests them with new values, affiliates them to expertise and re-configures relations of exclusion" (ibid: 336). Of course, efforts to re-invest communities involve the technologies of the self mentioned above, technologies which work to fashion ethical subjects responsible to their communities. Individuals here are made aware of their alliances to communities and thereby nudged to participate in regulation projects for those communities (MacLeavy 2009). As Rose points out, some individuals more readily internalize "responsibilities" than others. The exclusion of some from such partnering arrangements is a key issue that deserves further investigation. Larner (2004) notes that in New Zealand there is responsiblized self-regulation for some, more paternalist approaches for others, and repression for those who remain.

21 Finally, Wendy Larner and David Craig's emphasis on the fact that there are multiple neoliberal rationalities and technologies and that these forms of governance articulate differently in different contexts allows us to better understand the situation in Ranomafana under analysis in the present essay. The authors write that "different forms of social governance are associated with particular political-economic contexts, are informed by specific governmental rationalities, embody particular forms of expertise and ethics and take distinctive institutional forms" (2002:6).

The Ranomafana Region Today

22 In a recent publication (Hanson 2007), I presented conclusions of an ethnographic study carried-out on the outskirts of the Ranomafana National Park from 1992-1994. In the text, I replied to the following question posed by Wendy Larner: How have the "self-defined needs of social movements, cultural groups and neighborhoods been reconfigured and transformed into sites of self-government under neoliberalism?" (2003:6). I argued that the elicitation, interpretation and satisfaction of RNPP participant needs formed a technology of governance. Through such need interpretation politics, combined with a growing effort at conservation education, planners sought the environmental mobilization of the region's population by integrating prudent consciousness of the environment into daily practices. Such processes of normalization and intensification employed by the RNPP were part of an early neoliberal rationality. As part of this strategy, a set of entitlements were delivered to residents surrounding the RNP in exchange for the loss of access to the enclosed forest land and resources. The Project sought to document, care for and regulate the participating population through a host of health, education and agricultural development initiatives. For the most part, the planning and implementation of the RNPP was not built on market logic. The RNPP did, however, initiate projects to have local participants sell items made from locally grown grasses and engage in community-based environmental tourism. The multiple and overlapping rationales informing RNPP technologies lend substance to Gupta & Sharma's (2006:278) problematization of too neat a narrative of the historical shifts between governmental rationalities.

23 We might now consider developments in Ranomafana through the governmentality lens. Today, some 15 years later, the integrated conservation/development program approach at Ranomafana has given way to an ecoregional conservation and development paradigm.

The RNP has morphed into the Ranomafana-Andringitra corridor covering some 282,070 hectares. Significantly, relations of rule in the area are now firmly informed by an advanced neoliberal, partnering state rationality. Conservation and development are being integrated in novel ways. The ICTE has retreated into the scientific exploration of the forests while handing off the development of residents in the corridor fringes to a host of partners. The needs of the people around the corridor are still seen as mediating the long-term health of the corridor's ecosystems. However, rather than being conceived in terms of a rather unindifferentiated population, residents are approached in terms of their individual actions in relation to their communities. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the dozens of community based forest management contracts guiding practice in the forest. In the host of such "development" programs now surrounding residents, empowerment is the new technology aimed at helping residents learn to meet their own needs.

24 An avalanche of technologies, programs and techniques are currently serving to instrumentalize, in a green fashion, ties between rural individuals, their communities, and the "environment". For analytic purposes, these initiatives can be divided in terms of partnering, agricultural development and forest management, infrastructure, education and communication. USAID's Ecoregional Initiative has been involved with over a hundred specific project activities and a wide array of leveraged partnering activities. The Comité Multilocal de Planification was established in 1999 as a multilevel stakeholder consultative mechanism representing state, civil society, program and project actors. The Committee includes such organizations as ANGAP, Collaboration Commune pour le Développement – Namana, Service d'Appui à la Gestion de l'Environement, Institut National de la Statistique, and Institut de Recherche pour le Développement. A coalition of mayors from the length of the eastern side of the corridor now manages the Centre d'appui aux Communes, while a set of stakeholders (Swiss Federal Railways, World Bank and Chemonics) has been organized to plan the development of the 165 kilometer FCE railway which runs from the port of Manakara to Fianarantsoa.

25 There are currently more than 80 community associations (many at the renewal stage) contracted to carry out community based forest management in the region. USAID's Business and Market group is working to prevent slash and burn farming. TIAVO supplies the needed credit to local farmers. Farmers are experimenting with the growth and marketing of *Jatropha curcas* for biodiesel fuel while J& J Bioenergy from South Africa is working in the region to develop a palm oil industry. In 2006, some 380 farmers planted 36 000 *Jatropha curcas*. In addition to an experimental Farmer Field School, USAID is working with three social mobilization approaches toward integrated agricultural development at the commune level: Farmer to Farmer Agricultural Extension, Child-to-Community and the Champion Community.

Countering Governmentality

26 Resistance is a relatively underdeveloped feature of the governmentality literature as a whole. Social scientific exploration of the manner in which rural Malagasy living in and around the nation's many protected areas contest and resist conservation and development is also lacking. A growing body of literature does, however, suggest that, at the very least, resident participants are not finding such efforts to be in their best interest (Raik & Decker 2007). In this section, I focus on a public ritual held at the

entrance to the RNP to tease out a number of novel means by which area farmers contest specific conservationist rationales, thereby engaging a highly complex field of power relations.

27 To help orient the analysis to follow, I will briefly revisit a point of theory raised above. Recall that Foucault rejects the liberal opposition between freedom and power. In his latter writings, Foucault argued that freedom can only entail configurations of technologies of the self. Resistance, for its part, was conceived as an integral feature of power's functioning. There is no point of resistance outside of power. Moreover, resistances "are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised" (Foucault 1980a:142). Foucault asks us, then, to imagine multiple forces of resistance saturating concentrations of power and traversing structured fields. He argues that "the problem is not so much that of defining a political "position" (which is to choose from a pre-existing set of possibilities) but to imagine and to bring into being new schemas of politicization" [or, a new "aesthetics of existence"] (Foucault 1980:160; see also Fletcher 2009).

28 A notable exception to the relative lack of attention to resistance in governmentality studies is the work of Pat O'Malley. O'Malley has been instrumental in critiquing the overly textual focus of the approach. In its concern with mentalities of rule, governmentality studies have tended to overlook social heterogeneity. If "rationality of government is understood as the replies given by rulers to questions they pose themselves rather than as discursive practices of rule – the latter containing the former – then the theoretical object is constrained to describing mentalities of rulers" (O'Malley, et. al. 997:509-510). One result, therefore, is that "what is missing from the literature is a sense of 'government from below' and, more generally, a rather pronounced silence about the ways in which resistance and rule relate to each other in positive and productive ways" (O'Malley1996:312).

29 It is precisely such attention to "government from below" and critical engagement that distinguishes Arjun Appadurai's (2002) important work with the Alliance, a coalition operating in Mumbai, India. Appadurai's analysis greatly enriches the toolkit I employ to understand the situation in Ranomafana. The Alliance is composed of three partner groups working together for the urban poor since 1987. Rather than helping the poor hold the state accountable for social insurances, the group seeks to broaden "invited" and establish "invented spaces" (Miraftab & Wills 2005) to engage state and international policy makers in a non-confrontational, long-term and realpolitik manner. Such spaces afford numerous possibilities for Alliance members to choose strategic issues on terms that they define. Commanding their own legibility, members are well positioned to demonstrate (as precedents) their competencies and their own tested need interpretations. As Appadurai notes, this is the very creative project of shaping knowledge of the poor into methods for poor activism. Also important about such spaces is the chance they offer to network and perform various scalar projects. Swyngedouw correctly argues that opposition groups so often find it difficult to "transcend the confines of a 'militant particularism' or 'particular localism'" (2004:33). Through their "insurgent citizenship" practices (Holston 1995) the Alliance "invites risk-taking activities by bureaucrats within a discourse of legality, allowing the boundaries of the status quo to be pushed and stretched; it creates a border zone of trial and error, a sort of research and development space within which poor communities, activists and bureaucrats can explore new designs for partnership" (Appadurai 2002: 34).

Ritually Erecting the Ranomafana National Park Foundation Stone

30 The remainder of the present article is dedicated to the analysis of a public performance in which RNPP staff and members of the resident Malagasy communities erected a stone megalith "celebrating the cooperation between RNPP staff and the local population in protecting the National Park" (Patricia Wright, International Director of the RNPP – personal communication). The relevant events took place directly outside of the entrance to the National Park on May 31, 1991 and November 25, 1994. I contend that the events involve the kind of insurgent resistances just described.

31 The stone megalith whose erection formed the core of the event is known as a *vatofehizoro* . Translated literally into English, the term reads `stone tying the corners' - although the gloss `foundation stone' is easier on the ear. According to oral historians in Ranomafana, the stone is erected to commemorate projects or events in which Malagasy *citizens* cooperated with individuals of non-Malagasy origin.

32 On May 31, 1991, the RNPP and Zafindraraoto elders organized a series of events designed to help inaugurate the Ranomafana National Park. Attending the affair were close to 2,000 people, including representatives of USAID and the World Bank, ministers and other representatives of the Malagasy government, representatives from several U.S. academic institutions, and members of the resident Malagasy communities (RNP Newsletter 1992:1).

33 The RNPP *vatofehizoro* might have faded quietly out of public attention had it not been for a series of incidents that occurred three years after the 1991 inauguration. At some point in early 1994, RNPP planners initiated plans to develop the area adjacent to the Park entrance. To make room for the construction of a visitor center, a building housing offices and sleeping quarters for researchers, and a tent camp area, laborers hired by the Park Project removed the RNPP megalith. The removal had a profound effect on residents. For many of the Malagasy I spoke with, RNPP staff had committed a "sin" (*ota*), disrespecting both lineage ancestors and the social relationships that had been established in 1991.

34 The struggle to redefine the *vatofehizoro* finally occurred with the 1994 ceremonial (re)erection of the stone. Many of the same parties who had attended the 1991 events returned to the visitor's entrance to the Ranomafana Park. As in the celebration three years earlier, both RNPP staff and resident Malagasy were invited to speak, and both groups did so in traditional Malagasy oratorical style (*kabary*). The day's events opened with speeches by Ralita (chief of the Zafindraraoto lineage who are *tompon-tany*, or "masters of the land" in Ranomafana and upon whose ancestral land the foundation stone rests), Raliva (chief of one of the Zafindraraoto lineage's segments), and Patricia Wright. Ralita performed the original ceremony in 1991 and the one in 1994. Approximately half way through some three hours of *kabary* performances, the ritual erection of the *vatofehizoro* began.

35 The communicative goals of the RNPP staff and local Malagasy speakers grew out of very different interpretations of the ceremonies. For the RNPP, the foundation stone was being erected to [1] celebrate the cooperation between RNPP participants over the last three years; [2] inaugurate the new Project buildings; [3] to publicize the beginning of the

Park's second Phase; and [4] to respect resident cultural practices. The performances given by Project staff gave little attention to the celebration three years earlier or the removal of the stone. Rather, the locus of these performances was squarely in the present. For the resident Malagasy, on the other hand, the ritual performance not only functioned to re-erect the foundation stone, but also to atone for the sin committed against the ancestors by the removal of the stone (a ritual segment known as a *fahotana kaodela*). Unlike Wright, however, Ralita's territorialization of the present depended heavily upon resources from the past. The chief sought recognition of his lineage's control over land within the Ranomafana National Park and their own vision of the future.

36 We might now turn to the actual discourse of the 1994 (re)erection ceremony[3]. Consider first a speech given by Patricia Wright. As part of her performance, Wright spoke in the Malagasy language and employed the traditional Malagasy *kabary* style. An important communicative goal in this speech is to contextualize the day's events within the ongoing present and frame the event in terms of broader conservationist goals. We can begin to explore some of this communicative work by first considering the fact that Wright employs the *kabary* form. Elinor Ochs (1974) in her study of *kabary* amongst the Merina people of Madagascar's high plateau traces the historical development of this form of oratory from its use by early Merina royalty in public speeches to its role in contemporary village council (*fokonolona*) meetings. Ochs argues that among the central goals of any *kabary* performance is to gain *toky*, or the trust of the audience. Such trust is then enlisted to help motivate participants toward the completion of very practical tasks (see Hanson 2000).

37 The residents of the Ranomafana region recognized a distinction reported by Philipe Beaujard (1983:342) in his study of the Tanala Ikongo (located to the near south of Ranomafana). Residents concluded that Wright was working to give a *kabarom-panjakana* (government *kabary*) the more intimate feel of a standard *kabaro* (the discourse specific to a type of *fokonolona* meeting that forbids the participation of non-*fokonolona* members). In verse 3, line 1, Wright tells her audience that "you all are now our kin here in Madagascar". In verse 4, she argues that the stone "binds" participants together in conservation. Finally, in verse 5, she employs the proverbial image of the brothers going into the forest (she notes that "We are brothers going into the forest in the conservation of nature"). In these examples, Wright employs an idiom of kinship to align those present to her visions of the Ranomafana surround. Stated more dramatically, Wright is utilizing Malagasy kinship to entreat residents to cease the practice of slash and burn (verse 5, line b) and adopt a conservationist ethos (She pleads, "And so I entreat you that we all please make an effort here in the reduction of swidden"). Writing of conservation efforts in and around Madagascar's Masoala National Park, Eva Keller argues that to "tell the Malagasy farmers to preserve the enormous biodiversity on Masoala by stopping their growth on the land – that is, by having fewer children and not creating more 'land that enables life' and 'land of the ancestors' – is not simply a request to change a certain mode of cultivation. Rather the conservationist program is an assault on one of the most fundamental values held by people in rural Madagascar: that is, the value of the growth of life through kinship and through one's roots in the land" (2008:662). This contradiction has certainly evaded much of the conservation work across the island.

38 As I noted earlier, Wright does not attempt to insulate her discourse from the ongoing interactional environment. Quite the opposite, she metapragmatically centers the locus

of her performance firmly within the present. Thus, Wright, in the opening lines of her performance, greets each of the groups participating in the ritual by name. Also, the very frequent appearance of such nominal deictics as "this occasion" and "this stone", and locative forms such as "here in Madagascar", help tie the discourse to its performative ground. Finally, the proverb concerning the two brothers traveling into the forest is presented in truncated form, the second half of the original proverb being replaced by explicit conservationist terms.

39 Some thirty minutes after Wright's speech, Ralita performed the erection ceremony. The ritual prayer under analysis below is part of a wider set of rituals known as *lanonana*. The Zafindraraoto ancestral estate is at its most objectified form during any one of the eight ritual events that fall under this broad designation. The *fahotana kaodela* (the prayer to remove sin) is an important part of this particular *fananganana vatofehizoro* (foundation stone erection). At the center of all *lanonana* is the performance of the *saotra*, a highly formalized prayer uttered by the lineage chief who is also known as the *mpitan-kazomanga* , or 'guardian of the *hazomanga*' (a piece of wood – in this case, *mpanjakabetany* - marking lineage identity). The prayer can be divided into three parts. In the first section, the creator God Zanahary is summoned, directed to the ceremonial space of the altar and informed as to the nature of the ritual performance, asked for blessing, and then steered toward his route of departure. The second section of the *saotra* is directed toward the ancestors (*razana*). Here, the *mpitan-kazomanga* maps the boundaries of the lineage's ancestral land (*tanindrazana*) in great detail. He does this by crying out to the five cardinal locations, while the mountain-side tombs found in each location along with the important ancestors buried therein are identified by name. Next, the ancestors are guided to the base of the altar. The speaker then explains the goal of the ritual, asks for blessing, and guides his ascendants homeward.

40 The third section of the *saotra* is known as the *fafy*, or aspersion. Depending upon the type of ritual being performed, the aspersion can be placed at either the beginning or end of the prayer and the chief can broadcast either the blood of a sacrificial animal, locally-brewed rum (*toaka gasy*), or water. Facing northeast, the *mpitan-kazomanga* broadcasts the liquid blessing six times, then three times, then once. As he reaches the numbers 6, 3, and 1, Ralita utters a highly standardized blessing and adds a mention of the "kinship" relations and "solidarity" (*firaisankina*) that attempts to binds all in attendance. During the 1994 *fafy*, Ralita sprays blood from the cow's heart on the foundation stone, the assembled Zafindraraoto and on as many of the various participants he could reach.

41 The prayer itself lasted nearly ten minutes. The three sections or "scenes" of the prayer are subdivided into verses on the basis of rising and falling intonation contours. There are a total of 48 verses. The altar, constructed by the *mpahandro saotra* (a *saotra* cook from the Maromainty lineage – an ex-slave line) is built at the base of the foundation stone.

42 A fundamental challenge facing Ralita during the *saotra* is to manage the contradictory tendencies to, on the one hand, construct a traditionally recognizable *saotra,* thereby drawing on ancestral authority (and words) as the *mpitan-kazomanga*, and, on the other, to establish a performance frame large enough to include the non-Zafindraraoto bureaucrats and policymakers present. A distinction made by Hanks (1990:349) between the locative and directional (schematic) organizations of space in Maya practice may be helpful here. Locative organizations, and their associated cardinal places, are absolute, bounded by a defining perimeter and not defined in relation to a moving center. They help to totalize spatial areas. Directional schema, however, always begins with the

corporeal, or the "indexical zeropoint" of the actor(s), and lead toward cardinal points. Objects are located along cardinally oriented directions. All *saotra* performances involve the basic ritual process of integrating "absolute space *marked by the cardinally fixed ancestors] with the indexical frame of performance, by transposing the former, step by step, into the latter" (Hanks 1990:339). When complete, the integration of both spaces creates a bridge between ancestral forces, the performer and the audience. Unique to this performance, however, is that in his emergent performance framework, Ralita is very concerned with the interests of a heterogeneous group of participants. Thus, he faces an inordinate amount of labor juggling the absolute world of the ancestors with the multifaceted nature of ongoing performance context.

43 Ralita begins the prayer by immediately working to secure a locative organization of space by calling to the four cardinal places and (a bit latter) inviting the ancestors to lower themselves to the altar. Through this process, a "diagrammatic icon of absolute cardinal space" (ibid: 335) is created at the altar. The indexical ground for the six times that Ralita utters the locative deictic "there" in verse 2, lines a-f, is now an abstracted center.

Malagasy Original
1.
a. Mangataka fahanginana daholo ary moa fa <
b. hiantso <
c. an'Andriamanitra <
d. sy ny razana isika. >
2.
a. ANY ATSIANANANA, <
b. AO NO ISEHOAN'NY VOLANA SY ny masoandro. >
c. ANY ANDREFANA, <
d. AO NO IVOAHAN'NY TANANA BE VOLY foto-kanina. <
e. Any AVARATRA no misy ny andriana. <
f. Any ATSIMO ny iavian'ny hazomanga. >
English Translation
1.
a. Silence everyone because <
b. we are calling <
c. Andrimanitra <
d. And the ancestors. >
2.
a. THERE IN THE EAST, <
b. IT IS THERE THAT THE MOON AND the sun APPEAR. >
c. THERE IN THE WEST, <
d. IT IS FROM THERE WHICH COMES THE VILLAGE WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF staple CROPS. <
e. There in the NORTH are the nobles. <
f. There in the SOUTH is the origin of the hazomanga. >

44 Ralita lists the cardinal places four times during his performance. At the beginning and end of his prayer (verses 2 and 48) these places are brought to bear on the performance, setting the terms to engulf everyone in attendance within an absolute space.

45 A set of other features mark this initial section of the prayer as being concerned with "fixing" the performance space. First, at numerous points, explicit performatives ("you are called, Zanahary") are employed and there is a noticeable lack of first person reference (until verse 17). Such cues suggest that Ralita is still working with absolute space. Next, Ralita establishes an intonational pattern which functions as an

entextualization device. Entextualization is the process through which social actors, employing various poetic and rhetorical devices, isolate sections of discourse from ongoing social interactions (Bauman & Briggs 1990). Notice that in verse 2, all but one of the lines from a-e exhibits a rising intonation curve and remain at a relatively high pitch at line's end. The sound shape of line f, on the other hand, curves downward and ends at a considerably lower pitch. Ralita uses this intonation pattern throughout the entire prayer to organize his discourse within manageable blocks. Through his lyric practice, which is recognized as "traditional" by Ranomafana residents generally, Ralita powerfully strengthens the sense of ancestral presence, thereby giving enormous authority to his words. Also, Ralita's lexical choices are revealing. In verse 2, he mentions the cardinal locations and their associated processes, in verse 23 he specifies long-held traditions of ritual altar preparation, and from verses 29-45 he displays his remarkable competency in locating tombs and their founding ancestors within points on the ancestral land. Thus, Ralita supplements the ongoing spatio-temporal setting to create a diagram of the ancestral estate.

46 Consider some of the means by which Ralita "scales up", or expands the scope of the performance framework. First, it is important to point out that *saotra* discourses have remained remarkably stable through time. Of the dozens of *saotra* I recorded in the Ranomafana region, all of them mirror almost word-for-word a version recorded in the Ranomafana region between 1936-1939 by Gaudebout, the French colonial District Chief of Ifanadiana (Gaudebout & Molet 1957). Ralita, in dramatically departing from this formula, is stretching the boundaries of the genre. In a bit of discourse wherein Ralita explains to the ancestors and to the creator god the reason for the ritual's performance, he strategically uses the story of the stone's erection, removal and re-erection to remark on the various interests of the audience members. He tells of the Americans who flew through the air to research and conserve nature and to develop ("*fandrosoana*") the local populations. He discusses the meetings between RNPP staff and the Malagasy government, where the Americans respected proper bureaucratic channels and Malagasy officials. He makes noticeable mention of the Malagasy ICDP workers who built the new camp site buildings[4]. He also mentions the Zafindraraoto elders and the Malagasy army. Representatives of all these groups were in attendance and now become, to modify Goffman's (1983:131) terminology, consciously acknowledged "over hearers" (the ancestors and Zanahary representing the "ratified addressees").

47 In verses 4–6, Ralita further amends the traditional *saotra* with Biblical references. He mentions the Christian god's creation of heaven, hell and earth, the sixth and seventh days of creation according to Genesis and the differential placing of humans throughout the globe. Such allusions are more reminiscent of *kabary* performances in Madagascar than ritual prayers. Although the two verbal art genres are very different, an excellent recent study by Jennifer Jackson (2008) of highland Malagasy political *kabary* is instructive with regard to Ralita's communicative strategy. Ralita's prayer is a mixture of traditional *saotra*, protestant sermonic traditions and elements of political oratory. Amongst the Merina of Madagascar's highlands, Jackson explores how a similar group of oral and cartooning registers with their associated social fields are interanimated by performers who thereby "effectively fram[e] and navigat[e] particular publics for particular interests" (ibid:214). For Ralita, the goal of such interanimation is to construct a wider scope and scale of appreciation for Zafindraraoto claims to land and life practices.

48 In verses 7-9, Ralita continues to broaden the participant framework of the ritual to include American conservationists, researchers and development agents. Earlier, I employed the term scale to characterize Ralita's performance politics. Again, the chief is concerned to broaden the scale of his discourse so as to focus policy maker attention on Zafindraraoto claims. Returning to the governmentality literature, Van Baar (2006) rightly argues that the approach ought not to operate with a reified understanding of programs and technologies as unfolding on predetermined scales. Geographers, for their part, have long argued that scales are *ongoing* social constructions (see Gezon 2005). However, as Moore (2008) points out, scholars tend to conflate scale as practice (as categories of everyday experience) with scale as analysis (as abstracted social scientific categories): "the tendency to partition the social world into hierarchically ordered spatial 'containers' is what we want to explain – not explain things with" (ibid:212). By adopting the scalar dimensions of practice as the focus of analysis and thus conceiving scalar sedimentations such as the global and local as being always unique (Kaiser & Nikiforova 2008), we are better positioned to investigate scale politics as opening "alternative ecological public spheres" (Escobar 2001:166). Ralita is involved in precisely such a scalar project.

49 Ralita, continuing his explanation to Zanahary of the nature of the present ritual, now turns to his original *saotra* of 1991. For the first time, Ralita explicitly establishes the connection between the 1991 and 1994 performances. In verse 16, line d, the chief recontextualizes his discourse within his earlier performance by loudly exclaiming, "In the past was the foundation stone on the thirty-first of May 1991". He does much the same in verse 17, line a, with the utterance, "During that time with you Zanahary, it was I who did the prayer like today". Ralita then recounts the original ceremony. In verse 20, lines 4-11, the chief reports his own speech directly.

50 In verses 29-36, Ralita invokes the ancestors resting in tombs throughout the ancestral estate. He specifically calls the names of ancestors and their tombs located on or near the perimeter of the estate's boundaries. With remarkable clarity, Ralita ties the tomb sites to rivers and waterfalls that delineate the perimeter. Consider verse 34 as an example of this discourse:

Malagasy Original
34.
a. ATO ... AA ... <
b. ANTSAHAKARAMY, <
c. KENDRENA<
d. FASANDAHY. <
e. DIA MANARAKA MADRORONA <
f. Indrindra fa <
g. mahazo an'iny rian-drano mangitsy mianatsimo manaraka ny vinany indrindra fa <
h. iny an-dRanovao iny <
i. ao mitsikafo ao, ao. <
j. KEHINA DAHOLO IANAREO. >
English Translation
34.
a. HERE, ... AAA ... <
b. ANTSAHAKARAMY, <
c. KENDRENA, <
d. FASANDAHY. <
e. THEN FOLLOWING THE DESCENT, <

f. especially <
g. along the cold waterfall going south and following the embouchure <
h. that in Ranovao is <
i. floating there, there. <
j. CALLING YOU ALL. >

51 Ralita's remarkable topogeny performance - his recitation of place names as a spatial supplement to genealogy (Fox 1997) – represents a particularly creative form of counter mapping. Ralita recognizes that his recitation contains points of cartographic reference familiar to the policy makers in attendance. At the same time, however, such a ritual "mapping against power" (Brosius & Tsing 1998:5) renders any subsequent attempts to appropriate the Zafindraraoto ancestral estate difficult due to the non-abstract type of space embedded in the ritual discourse (see Bryant 2002).

52 My analysis of only a few short verses from Ralita's prayer should suffice to demonstrate three main points. First, Ralita, taking advantage of the possibilities offered by this very unique, collaborative, public performance event, employs an array of communicative devices to enlarge the participant framework of the performance. He reaches across multiple social divides to speak to the assembled Zafindraraoto kin, ancestors, gods, RNPP and NGO staff, agents of multilateral organizations and the press. He struggles to focus their attention on Zafindraraoto claims to land, associated social organizational forms, patterns of interaction with the forest, and their claims to a deep set of historical experiences in the region. Second, Ralita is particularly concerned with tying the two erection ceremonies together. This is part of the Zafindraraoto strategy of precedent-setting. The Park, in part, sits squarely on top of their ancestral estate. The Zafindraraoto demonstrate that they are here on the estate in the present, that they were there during the 1991 ceremony and that they have lived on the land long before. It is the Zafindraraoto's mode of living within the forest that motivates some of their members to call themselves Tanala (People of the Forest). For the rest, as Ralita claims in verse 20, line e, "what makes the land the land, makes the people people". The Zafindraraoto have definite interpretations of their own needs, their identities and those "best practices" that they feel should guide their future. Finally, Ralita's topogeny performance demonstrates how profoundly the Zafindraraoto know the contours of their land and their own social networks. Such knowledge is crucial and forms a countergovernmentality.

Conclusion

53 Eudaily argues that "many if not most indigenous claims are not limited to redress for past grievances – they are an attempt to take a more active political role in the present and future" (2004: 235). This is precisely the sentiment expressed to me by Malagasy residents surrounding the Ranomafana Park throughout my period of field research. Rather than a rigid defense of tradition, residents seek creative modes of engagement with the local and global forces they confront. They strive to fashion these forces "in such a way that their visions of the world may find minimum conditions for their existence" (Escobar 2001:168).

54 The rural Malagasy in Ranomafana have little choice but to strive to both maximize the few gains they make with the conservationists forces and soften their setbacks. Staying one step ahead of the policy making process is key. In Ambodiaviavy, where I carried out

the bulk of my research, residents are developing practices of community auto attendance and mutual observation. The women's cooperative has taken the lead in keeping records on population size and growth, the physical development of infants and children and community land claims. People are also knowledgeable about the everyday lives of their neighbors: doors of houses remain open much of the day and individual possessions are a matter or common knowledge. These are the depths of "population" that governmental programs rarely penetrate. By recording such matters, residents construct their own legibility from below (Appadurai: 2002), squarely engaging governmentality.

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NOTES

1. For works that do address the history of conservation efforts in Madagascar and power relations in and around the Ranomafana National Park, see the following: Gezon (2005), Harper (2002) and Kull (1996).

2. See Harper (2002) for a valuable analysis of the Ranomafana ICDP.

3. Due to limitations on the length of the present article, all segments of the discourse under analysis cannot be presented. For copies of complete transcripts of the *kabary* and *lanonana* prayer, please contact the author. For the discourse that does appear in the text, the following transcription key applies :1,2,3,etc. = Verses, a,b,c, etc. = Lines (discourse from pause to pause), > = Intonation curves downward by lines end, < = Intonation curves upward by lines end,

CAPITALS = Loud, Underlines = Proverbs, aphorisms, riddles, etc., [...] = Transcriber‘s remarks, / .../ = Line overlap, (...) = Unintelligible discourse

4. See Sodikoff (2007) for a particularly insightful analysis of ICDP laborers in Madagascar.

ABSTRACTS

National and international conservation efforts in Madagascar have gradually intensified over the last two decades. The population of the island is also increasing; Madagascar’s growth rate currently stands at just over three percent. Many rural people who live in and around the millions of hectares of protected areas are being pulled into attempts to integrate conservation, development and family planning. As the Malagasy increasingly participate in these programs, their resistance to such forces has attracted relatively little social scientific research. This article seeks to address this gap. Power operations entail their own resistances; therefore, a detailed picture of the conservation apparatus (dispositif) is required. I employ a governmentality approach to draw such a picture of Madagascar and the rain forests surrounding the Ranomafana and Andringitra National Parks. I then present an ethnographic study of a public ritual performance held at the entrance to the Ranomafana National Park that involved resident Malagasy, Park staff, and a range of policy makers. An analysis of the day’s events shows a rural Malagasy people expanding a space from which to engage policy makers on their own terms, with their own strategic need interpretations and self-formations. Through this performance, residents work to demonstrate their historical claims to land, to articulate their successful interrelations with the forests and to offer a novel platform for a realpolitik dialogue about their own future.

Les efforts de conservation nationale et internationale à Madagascar se sont graduellement intensifiés pendant les deux dernières décennies. La population de l’île a également augmenté ; le taux de croissance est actuellement de 3 %. Beaucoup de ruraux qui vivent dans et autour des six millions d’hectares de régions protégées ont été entraînés dans des tentatives d’intégrer conservation, développement et planning familial. Bien que les Malgaches participent intensément à ces programmes gouvernementaux et non-gouvernementaux, leur contestation et leur résistance à de telles forces ont suscité relativement peu de recherches en sciences sociales. Cet article se propose de combler cette lacune. Les opérations de pouvoir produisent par elles-mêmes des manifestations de résistance ; il est donc nécessaire d’avoir une image détaillée du dispositif de la conservation. J’emploie une approche sur la gouvernementalité dans le but de tracer une telle image de Madagascar dans son ensemble et de la forêt pluviale autour de Ranomafana et du Parc National de l’Andringitra en particulier. Je présente ensuite une séance rituelle publique tenue à l’entrée au Parc National de Ranomafana qui a inclus les habitants malgaches, des représentants du Parc et des décideurs. Une analyse de ce qui s’est passé dans cette occasion montre comment la population rurale malgache s’efforce d’élargir l’espace à partir duquel elle peut conduire les décideurs dans ses propres conditions, et avec leur propre besoin d’interprétations stratégiques. A travers cette célébration, les habitants cherchent à démontrer leurs revendications historiques sur la terre, pour articuler leurs interrelations réussies avec les forêts, et pour présenter une nouvelle plate-forme pour un dialogue réaliste politique sur leur futur.

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